



Committed to the future of rural communities.

NEWS RELEASE

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT REMINDS COMMUNITIES OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR EMERGENCY WARNING SIRENS

Gregory C. Branum, Missouri USDA Rural Development State Director, wants to remind communities that funding assistance is available to help purchase emergency warning sirens.

“As we experience the tornado season (March-May), the safety of our rural residents is vitally important,” said Branum. “Advance warning of tornadoes can allow people the opportunity to take shelter and lower the chance of serious injury or death.”

USDA Rural Development, through its Community Programs loan and grant program, has assisted seventy two Missouri communities since January, 2001, including Grant City in northwest Missouri, Kahoka in northeast Missouri, Pierce City in southwest Missouri, and Bonne Terre in southeast Missouri. Communities not yet served with this protection are welcome to visit our website or contact an agency official for assistance. The Rural Development Community Facility Program was authorized with the primary purpose of helping rural communities with essential services.

Many partnerships have been formed to stretch the funds and minimize the costs. Branum pointed out that many Rural Electric Cooperatives, AmerenUE, local non-profit organizations, and cities have helped rural communities with installation of the early warning sirens. In some cases poles have been donated along with other materials plus labor for installation. The amount of grant eligibility, which can pay for up to 75% of the cost, is determined by the applicant’s median household income and population as established by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Some rural counties have provided county wide emergency planning and protection. One example is the Stoddard County Development Foundation which has received financial assistance to purchase emergency warning sirens for communities in Stoddard County. “The Foundation has made a strong commitment to provide quality service to the residents and the Rural Development funds were essential,” said Bill Aslin, President of the Foundation. Funds were approved for several Stoddard County communities to benefit for the early warning emergency sirens systems including the communities of Advance, Bernie, Bell City, Bloomfield, Dudley, Essex, Puxico and two sirens for Dexter.

Branum continued: “Rural Development’s commitment to the future of rural communities would not be complete without assistance that helps communities protect their citizens. We are very proud of every emergency siren that we have been able to help finance”.

Additional information on these projects or other USDA Rural Development programs is available on the agency website at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo>.

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